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UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 KUWAIT 001035

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E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KU](#) [KDMR](#)

SUBJECT: KUWAIT MEDIA REACTION, MARCH 22: WAR IN IRAQ

1. SUMMARY: Kuwaiti commentators complain that Arab world media continue to be biased towards Kuwait, and ask rhetorically why other Arabs do not decry Iraq's launching of surface to surface missiles against Kuwait in recent days. One commentator lauds Kuwaitis for their behavior on the first night of the war writing, "Every single person was at his or her post, unlike what happened in 1990."

Photos of US and British medics treating injured Iraqi POWs were featured prominently in all Kuwaiti newspapers. Kuwaiti dailies report that the GOK will donate a total of USD 12 million for aid to the Iraqi people. Kuwaiti cooperatives (grocery stores) have begun to make gas masks available to the general public, and all newspapers report huge crowds in front of the Saudi Embassy seeking visas to leave Kuwait by land (Note: Most Kuwaitis appear today to believe that the threat from Iraq has receded.) End Summary.

2. News stories: All newspapers prominently published photos, some on the front pages, of US and British soldiers offering medical treatment to Iraqi POWs.

Al-Seyassa and Al-Anba learned that Kuwaiti authorities captured seven Iraqi soldiers on Kuwait's Warba Island after their boat came under attack by coalition forces.

All newspapers report Ministry of Defense spokesman Col. Yousef Al-Mulla's announcement that three Kuwaiti Patriot missiles successfully destroyed an Iraqi SCUD missile launched towards Kuwait on March 21.

All newspapers report that Kuwait's Permanent Representative to the UN Mission in Geneva, Ambassador Darrar Al-Rozouqi, announced that Kuwait will donate USD 2 million to UNHCR to aid Iraqi refugees. Al-Seyassa daily also reports that the Director of the Humanitarian Aid Center, retired General Ali Al-Moumen, said that Kuwait will be sending USD 10 million in installments to aid the Iraqi people.

All newspapers report that the Ports Authority of the Ministry of Interior announced that expatriates in Kuwait without a valid visa will be allowed to leave without paying a fine.

Thousands of expatriates queued in front of the Saudi Embassy yesterday for visas to transit by land through Saudi Arabia to their home countries, all newspapers report.

Secretary-General of the Kuwait Journalist Association,

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Faisal Al-Qanaie, in comments published in Al-Rai Al-Aam and Al-Qabas, questioned why there were no demonstrations in any Arab country denouncing Iraqi missile attacks on Kuwait.

Arab League Secretary-General, Amr Moussa, described Iraq's missile attacks against Kuwait as a "negative development," and stressed that the Arab league does not approve of these attacks, Al-Qabas and Al-Watan report.

All newspapers report that cooperatives (grocery stores) in Manusira and Abdulla Al-Salem areas of Kuwait City announced they will be selling one thousand gas masks to Kuwaiti citizens residing in the two areas; other cooperatives are also making plans to sell gas masks.

Editorials

3. "The First Day of War"
MP Ahmad Al-Rubei wrote in independent Al-Qabas (3/22): "We should be proud of how the first day of the war went domestically. Every single person was at his or her post, unlike what happened in 1990 when we were invaded by Iraq. We lived with the sounds of [air raid] sirens on the first day of the war, and we succeeded in dealing with them. This current war is an opportunity to regain the trust in our

government, our military institutions and ourselves."

14. "Kuwait and the Media War"

MP Abdelmohsen Jamal wrote in independent Al-Qabas (3/22):
"At this time of war, we need a distinctive media plan. to focus on the Iraqi missile aggressions against Kuwait, and to realize that the Iraqi regime will not hesitate to threaten Kuwait in any possible way. We have to inform the world that the Iraqi media is lying by denying such attacks against Kuwait. Our official media must be transparent and balanced in order to win this media war."

15. "The Media of Defeat"

Dr. Shamlan Al-Essa wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (3/22):
"As was expected, the allied forces led by the US were able to occupy a big part of Iraq without resistance. but we were astonished at how some media were not objective in presenting facts and figures. It was very obvious that the Arab media were siding with Iraq-- which is normal because they reject any aggression on any Arab country-- but to broadcast lies denying what other foreign media were reporting is not acceptable. The Arab satellite channels were not subjective in their analysis and they used sentimental language in their reporting. Therefore, the foreign media reporting was more truthful, realistic and more credible because they broadcast facts as they happen."

16. "The Fall of Basra: How and When"

Abdelrahman Al-Ajmi wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (3/22):
"America and Britain will be in an embarrassing situation if Basra does not fall quickly into the hands of their forces this week. This situation will result in putting both countries under international pressure. It is also certain that the American and British forces are concerned about minimizing their losses and about the safety of the Iraqi people also."

17. "A War On the Dark World"

Abdelamir Al-Torki wrote in independent Al-Seyassah (3/22):
"The war is not against Iraq. It is a war against the dark world, which failed to establish justice, democracy and freedom. The war is against Saddam Hussein, the biggest tyrant and oppressor. The war is against the Arab regimes that are living, in the dark ages. The war on Saddam is a war against the world, which rejects globalization and the establishment of a new world system. We thank God that the war on Saddam has been initiated from Kuwait to put an end to Arab dark regimes."

JONES